

PACIFIC COAST SHELLFISH GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program

Final Report:

“Expanding Markets for Sustainable Oyster Aquaculture in the Pacific Coast Region”

December, 2001

PHASE ONE

Step One: Map the Marketplace

In order to provide West Coast oyster growers with a clear understanding of the current market, a study was conducted by the Food Marketing and Economics Group to determine consumer preferences, production trends, consumer demand trends, and current promotional and marketing activities. The primary purpose of this study was to identify marketing opportunities for Pacific Coast oysters.

The study consisted of the following components:

- *Reviewed Background Information* including production process, characteristics of oyster varieties, safe handling requirements, market trends and regulatory constraints.
- *Conducted Grower Interview Panels/Individual Interviews:* Three oyster grower interview panels were conducted at Marshall California, Tomales Bay; Olympia, Washington; South Bend, Washington. Interviews with individuals also took place, either in person or by phone. (See attached list.)
- *Industry Experts Interviewed:* Various representatives of the shellfish industry on the West Coast, B.C. and the Gulf Coast were interviewed (See final report, attached)
- *Trade buyers and Brokers Interviewed:* Oyster brokers, wholesalers and buyers were interviewed, including grocery chains, independent fish markets and restaurants. These interviews focused on desirable product features and services, current sourcing patterns, and promotion needs concerning oysters. (See list.)
- *Conducted Consumer Focus Groups:* Groups were conducted in Novato, California on May 3, including a “User” group (i.e., oyster consumers) and a “Non-User” group (i.e. non-oyster eaters). A full report on these findings is attached.

Step Two: Interactive Marketing Database Developed

An interactive data base that allows oyster growers and buyers the means for exchanging information about product availability and demand was successfully developed and is now accessible through the PCSGA Web site (www.pcsga.org). The data base enables growers to directly input information on their products and companies into the system. Educational workshops were held September through November to provide information

on the survey findings and recommendations and training on utilizing the on-line “Marketplace” system.

DELIVERABLES:

Step One

- 1) Market research surveys determined oyster buying habits and perceptions by consumers.
- 2) Current marketing methods were analyzed
- 3) Report summarizing the collected data completed and provided to growers (provided at PCSGA Annual Conference, regional workshops, and mailed)
- 4) Educational workshops on survey findings and potential for market expansion conducted *

Step Two

- 1) Data base developed which allows growers to input information regarding available product, company information; and link up for cooperative ventures.
- 2) Data base linked to PCSGA Web site allows access to interested buyers
- 3) Workshops on how to utilize data base conducted *
- 4) Guide to selling on the Internet (accessing data base) developed and presented at various workshops and presentations*

ATTACHMENTS:

Budget

Final Report

Consumer Focus Group report

“Identifying Marketing Opportunities” (Power Point presentation for grower workshop)

“Accessing “Marketplace” Data Base” (Power Point presentation for grower/buyer/broker workshops)

WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED:

PCSGA Annual Conference, Silverdale Washington, September 20, 2001

National Fisheries Institute Aquaculture Symposium, Los Angeles, CA., Oct. 8, 2001

California Growers Workshop, Marshall, California, October 17, 2001

Southern Oregon Growers Workshop, Coos Bay, Oregon, October 22, 2001

Northern Oregon Growers Workshop, Tillamook, Oregon, October 23, 2001

South Sound Washington Growers Workshop, Shelton, Washington, Oct. 31, 2001

Hood Canal Washington Growers Workshop, Quilcene, Washington, Nov. 9, 2001

Alaska Growers Workshop, Anchorage, Alaska, November 11, 2001

FISH EXPO, Seattle, Washington, November 15, 2001